scope and establishment of such regions is under consultation with stakeholders including the State Governments.

Pak stand on tariff relief to Indian items

179. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether even after accepting South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), the Government of Pakistan has been sticking to pre SAFTA trade conditions and has conveyed to SAARC that it will give tariff relief to India on 773 items only and not on 4872 items as agreed under the SAFTA agreement;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes Sir, The notification issued by the Government of Pakistan to give effect to SAFTA Tariff Liberalization Programme from 1st July, 2006 has a rider which states that it would be subject to their Import Policy order under which there is a list of importable items from India which at present has 773 items.

(b) and (c) The Government of India has conveyed to the SAARC Secretariat that the notification with the said rider is against the letter and spirit of the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), which has been ratified by all member States, including Pakistan, without any reservations. India has consequently requested SAARC for an urgent meeting of the SAFTA Ministerial Council (SMC). SMC is the highest decision making body of SAFTA and under Article 10 of SAFTA, SMC shall be responsible for the administration and implementation of SAFTA Agreement and all decisions and arrangements made within its legal framework.

Intellectual Property Institute at Nagpur

†180. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.